

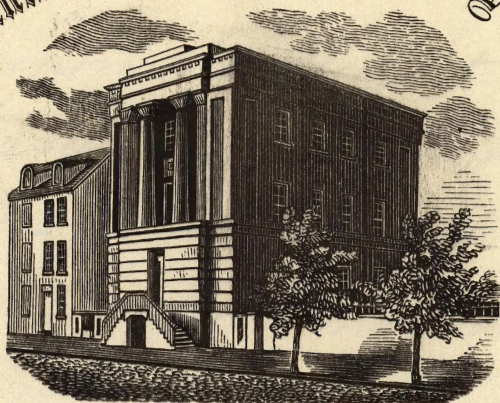


Hydrophobia its cause & treatment

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

of the

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FOR

The Degree of Doctor of Medicine

BY

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To enter upon the investigation of the cause of rabies, would seem to be, and doubtless is, presumptuous; but, as a student, I do not wish to arrogate to myself anything which does not, I imagine, belong to every independent observer; therefore in entering upon the subject of rabies, its cause, and the treatment of Hydrophobia, the intensified variety of rabies, I feel, as I shall have to pursue a very different course of examination of the phenomena of this horrible disease, that I must depart so far from the generality of medical observers, that I may be charged with innovation. But what need I care, if I should chance to be

so fortunate as to contribute a single idea, which, perchance, should even lead to the further investigation of the primum mobile of this supposed incurable pathological condition, and ultimately, to its successful treatment, according to the law Similia, Similibus, Curantur.

Head Hahnemann, like too many other Physicians, been content to have pursued the same course which his coadjutors had done, and too dishonest, to have acknowledged the fact, after he had discovered, that there was no truth nor scientific basis in the system of medicine then practiced, we might have been even at the present day

involved in the same difficulty, as to the law which now constitutes the practice of medicine a science.

All phenomena of disease depend upon, and arise from certain and specific causes; therefore, we of the present day, are just as much bound to investigate the prime cause of all diseases yet involved in doubt and mystery, as were the older Physicians, and, with the vast amount of their experience and medical theories at our command, we should, I think, be able to discover with much less difficulty, and with greater accuracy, the cause of disease than what they could.

Since no positive conclusions have been arrived at as to the cause of rabies, and nothing discovered to relieve the suffering, or save the life of an individual affected with hydrophobia, I propose to enter upon an investigation *aposteriori*, intending, if possible, to show the specific cause.

Having assumed such a position, I shall first give the history, symptoms, and treatment of hydrophobia recommended by the best authorities, then, the cause of spontaneous rabies, which I shall endeavor to prove by analogous cases, and lastly, an hypothetical course of treatment, which shall

have its foundation in the law of Homoeopathy.

History; Hydrophobia affects man only, and is induced by the inoculation with the virus from a rabid animal, the dog, the most frequent, although capable of being produced from all rabid animals, belonging to the canine and feline genera. This inoculation is most frequently produced by a bite from one of the animals above named, but is also capable of being consummated if some of the poison be placed upon an abraded surface. After one has been bitten, the wound generally heals as other wounds do, if not of too serious a character, but frequently presenting

an unhealthy blue appearance.

Symptoms; After a time, from five to ten week, and sometimes months and years, some authorities say, an unpleasant burning, numbness, or itching, is experienced in the cicatrix, with a creeping painful sensation towards the throat, the wound becoming inflamed again, and breaking open forming an ill looking ulcer, with hard everted edges, The unfortunate individual manifests a great anxiety, melancholy, desires to be alone, restless sleep, or entirely sleepless, pains in the back and other parts of the body, burning in the fauces and stomach, excessive thirst, sensitiveness to cold, alternative

heat and chills, vertigo, ringing in the ears, obscuration of sight, bright, shining, glassy eye, nausea, vomiting of bilious matter, breathing oppressed, pulse small and quick; many patients manifest a great desire for an embrace; the same authority says "men are attacked with priapism and seminal emissions, and women with furor uterinus;" constant urging to urinate, urine being passed drop by drop.

After it has passed into the hydrophobic, or convulsive stage, the sufferer evinces the most frightful aversion to liquids, in spite of his violent thirst; the mere sound of a fluid, as well as the

attempt to swallow a few drops of water, or even saliva, excite the most violent and excessive convulsions, or contractions of the muscles of the face, pharynx, chest and abdomen.

The most trivial affair, or the slightest contact, are sometimes sufficient to excite a convulsion. A constant secretion of tenaceous, and frothy saliva, also commence with this stage, which occasions foaming at the mouth. Some authors, say they howl and bark like a dog, others attribute the barking to an effort to throw off the saliva, and in consequence of the swollen and disordered condition of the throat,

the coughing is of a hoarse and croaking sound, which is mistaken for an effort to imitate the dog in barking. The eyes become blood-shot, twigid, and protruding from their cavities, rolling about wildly; he finally becomes raving, when it is almost impossible to control him; tries to destroy everything about him as well as himself.

These paroxysms it is stated, last fifteen, thirty, or sixty minutes, or probably longer, the patient dying in one of the convulsions in consequence of suffocation, or extreme prostration.

Succeeding these fits there is a calm, when the sufferer talks rationally, begs those around to put

an end to his sufferings, and to beware of him in his fury; sometimes he is perfectly exhausted, and dies in a soporous condition.

Post Mortem investigations reveal but slight changes, and, some say, that after careful dissections, nothing of importance was elicited; others have found the blood darker, fluid, the veins engorged, the muscles dark, red, and rigid; those of the throat inflamed.

Treatment. — Many remedies, and various modes of treatment have been adopted by the Physicians of the old school, with but little or no success; in fact, they say, "after the disease is established, nothing can be done with the prospect of a cure"

As a prophylactic they cut the wound out immediately, then cauterize the artificial wound with lunar caustic; this they do, or is recommended to be done, even as late as eighteen months, or two years after the occurrence of the bite; and, also after the presomitory symptoms have become developed.

Wood's practice of Med; Vol: ii p 841

Our Prof; of chemistry, Dr. Gemple, recommends the application of the actual cautery as soon as possible, burning it thoroughly, being sure to extend it as deep as the penetration of the wound; and, as a reason for its application, that all organic compounds are decomposed by the application of red heat; therefore if the wound be properly

cauterized, the chances are very favorable for preventing the appearance of hydrophobia; if the cautery cannot be immediately applied it should be sucked to prevent the absorption, if possible, of the poison; cupping glasses applied over ^{the} part are also recommended,

Dr Obering recommends radiating heat applied three or four times every day, until shiverings are produced; this practice being continued until the wound is healed without leaving a colored cicatrix.

Such was Hahnemann's faith in the prophylactic virtues of Belladonna, that he says, "a small dose of Bell; given every three or four days, is the best preventive of hydrophobia; one or two doses will cure it."

The principle remedies recommended for the treatment of hydrophobia by Homœopathic Authors, are Bell; Hays; Stram; and Canth;.

Indications for the administration of Bell; Melancholy, restlessness, great nervous sensibilities, sexual excitement, constant delirium, raging, talking about dogs, staring, protruding eyes, foam at the mouth, with loss of consciousness, tendency to destroy themselves, moaning, and howling, accompanied with fearful-ness, biting, gnawing, snarling like a dog, tears everything around him, bites and spits, begs those around to kill him, gnashing his teeth, convulsions, aversion to, and inability to swallow all kinds of liquids, dreadful spasms of the

throat, producing almost suffocation.

Kyos; Indicated before and after Bell's, when the convulsions are not so severe, nor of long duration, where there is not so much inclination to bite or spit, but a desire to tear everything around him, the spasms in the throat not so severe, but great dryness and burning are experienced; a peculiar dread of being bitten by animals, *delirium*.

Stram; When convulsions take place when the eye comes in contact with a brilliant object, or whatever reminds the patient of water, fits of singing and laughter, agitated sleep, sudden shrieks, and starting up with wild gestures.

Canth; Burning in the mouth and throat, much aggravated on attempting to swallow, paroxysms of fury alternating with convulsions, which are renewed by pressure on the abdomen or throat, increased sexual desire, priapism with seminal emissions, itching and burning of the vulva, difficulty in passing the urine, burning, titillation, and other irritating sensations in the lower part of the abdomen. Violent satanic convulsions, with hydrophobia; excessive secretion of mucus in the mouth, with foaming at the mouth, staring, protruding eyes, being red, and injected, great rage, delirium.

Lachesis, and Hydrophobin, are also recommended by some authors.

but as a general thing, I do not think they are received by the majority of Physicians, as meriting the properties ascribed to them.

Now as to the specific cause; which I believe to arise spontaneously, from an unsatisfied sexual desire; which I will now try to prove by a few observations which I believe are well founded.

1st A dog that has been castrated is not liable to be attacked with spontaneous rabies, which of course under those circumstances deprives him of all sexual instinct.

2nd Female dogs are believed to be exempt from the danger of spontaneous rage, unless deprived of sexual gratification,

And for this reason; their sexual desires are gratified to a greater extent than the males, for, when they have once copulated and become pregnant, they do not suffer the sexual excitement again for a long time.

3rd. Its nonoccurrence in the other domestic animals, of the class herbivora, which may be accounted for on these grounds. The males of that class, such as sheep, swine, cattle, and horses, are castrated with the exception of just enough to reproduce the species, which corresponds to my first and second proofs. They are not not exempt, of course, from the liability of inoculation. 4th. The similarity existing between hydrophobia, in man, and Strychnis,

and Nymphomania in the female

For examination of these two analogous diseases just mentioned, I would refer to Follman on diseases of the urinary and sexual organs, and Fehr's diseases of females. I will merely say the prime cause given by them for the appearance of these diseases is abstinence, and as a confirmation of the fact, the more frequent occurrence of Nymphomania in the female, than the corresponding disease in the male, and for this reason; Man has greater opportunities of satisfying his sexual passion without the liability of agency,

detection, whereas, the female is under considerable restraint from that cause, if she be desirous of retaining her virtue.

The hypothetical treatment. Since this disease, as already set forth owes its origin to a surexcitation of the sexual instincts, and since Cantharis exerts such a certain and specific action over those organs, thereby setting up an extensive derangement of the nervous system, of which almost the exact counterpart may be found in the phenomena of hydrophobia, I therefore conclude in accordance with the law of Homoeopathy, that if Cantharis be administered, by and through the same agency,

as was the virus from the rabid animal, which is by injection into the capillary circulation that it may be absorbed into the general circulation, there will be a very favorable chance of saving an individual from death after the disease has commenced its fearful work of destruction.

How far this may be positively true, remains yet to be actually proved, by trial; but that the proving of Cantharides upon the healthy subject, have a remarkable and striking analogy to this disease, is evident, and needs no further comment.

John L. Monell

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